



CONGRESSMAN HENRY A. WAXMAN NEWS

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WAXMAN BACKS NEW LAW ON SYNAGOGUE AND CHURCH VANDALISM

Congressman Henry A. Waxman (D-Los Angeles) is currently working for the enactment of a law which would make damage to religious buildings and their contents a Federal crime. The measure would give vandalized synagogues and churches FBI assistance in solving the crimes.

Under the Waxman-backed measure convicted vandals would be subject to a Federal punishment of up to five years in prison, a fine of up to \$10,000. or both. These Federal penalties would be imposed in addition to any state punishment to which the guilty persons are liable.

Waxman said,

"I am extremely disturbed by acts of vandalism and arson that have occurred in my own community recently. Synagogues have had Torah Scrolls stolen or desecrated, damage has been done to synagogue and church structures and both synagogues and churches have had various sacred objects of gold and silver stolen.

"The desecration of a sacred place of worship cannot be measured in terms of the dollar value of objects taken or the cost of repairs. The very values of our society are threatened when burglars and arsonists focus their attention on places of worship."

Waxman noted that ritual objects stolen, desecrated or destroyed are very often irreplaceable because of their antiquity, tremendous sentimental value or unique religious significance.

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